

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action mailed June 16, 2004, claims 12-27 are withdrawn, claims 1, 2, 5, and 8-10 are rejected and claims 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11 are objected to. Applicants have thoroughly reviewed the outstanding Office Action including the Examiner's remarks and the references cited therein. Without conceding the propriety of the rejections, Applicants have cancelled claims 1 and 2 without prejudice have amended claims 3, 4, 6 and 11 to place them in independent form, and have amended claims 5 and 8-10 to depend from claim 3 instead of claim 1. No substantive changes to any of claims 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11 are intended. The following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action. All the pending claims at issue are believed to be patentable over the cited references.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 5, 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 5,311,628 by Springer et al.¹ Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Anticipation under § 102 requires that the asserted reference contain each and every element of a claim. M.P.E.P. § 706.02.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Applicants have cancelled claims 1 and 2 and have amended claims 5, 9 and 10 so that they depend from claim 3, which the Examiner has indicated is allowable. Applicants now note that the rejection is moot as to claims 1, 2, 5, 9 and 10.

¹ Although the Office Action states that, "claims 1, 2, 5 and 9" are rejected, Applicants note that claim 10 is also treated in that section. Applicants therefore assume that claim 10 is rejected and Applicants base their response on that assumption.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Springer et al. and U.S. Patent No. 6,163,913 to DiSieno, *et al.* Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Applicants have amended claim 8 to depend from claim 3, which the Examiner has indicated is allowable, and now note that the rejection is moot as to claim 8.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants have amended claims 3, 4, 6 and 11 to place them in independent form and have amended claims 5 and 8-10 to depend from claim 3. Applicants now believe claims 3-11 to be condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that all objections and rejections be withdrawn, and that claims 3-11 be allowed. If, for any reason, the Examiner disagrees, please call the undersigned attorney at 202-861-1554 in an effort to resolve any matter still outstanding before issuing another action. The undersigned attorney is confident that any issue which might remain can readily be worked out by telephone.

Docket No. 87269.3581
Serial No.: 10/071,595
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PATENT

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicant petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036.

Respectfully submitted,

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